



Report to the Community

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2005

Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre

Our Mission

Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre offers alternative addiction services to women. Amethyst is committed to working with diverse and marginalized groups of women. Our aim is to support women, individually and together, to take control of factors affecting their health and well-being.

Our Philosophy

Amethyst is grounded in the feminist belief that women's experiences with alcohol and drugs cannot be separated from our experiences and status as women. We make direct links between the unequal position of women in society, the various forms of violence against women and substance use. A central task of Amethyst is to help women take charge of their lives by ending substance use and by making changes that enhance their strengths, their freedom and their choices.

Our Vision

Amethyst aspires to equality and justice for all women. A health service concerned with prevention as well as direct service, Amethyst works toward changing unjust social structures that place women at risk of addiction. We address and communicate the specific ways in which substance use affects women's well-being and why social change is necessary.

What We Do

Amethyst works with women, individually and in groups, who are concerned about their substance use and/or problem gambling. We also work in groups with women and children at high risk of developing an addiction, to help prevent addiction through education and social action. We provide training and consultation in the community to improve understanding of women's addiction issues.

How We Work

Amethyst develops women-centered ways of working. Feminist values underpin our commitment to participatory management, shared responsibility and respect for individual differences. We believe the delivery of quality services to consumers is directly related to how we work together as staff, board and volunteers. Amethyst sees itself as part of the women's community in and beyond Ottawa, working with other services and organizations to promote issues of common concern. Amethyst offers services in English and French. We are committed to maintaining and enhancing effective French language services in the agency and to ensuring the continued availability and quality of these services.



**Helping
Women
Build
Healthier
Lives**

488 Wilbrod Street
Ottawa, ON
K1N 6M8

(613) 563-0363
TTY: (613) 563-2995
Fax: (613) 565-2175

E-mail: amethyst@amethyst-ottawa.org

Website:

www.amethyst-ottawa.org

REPORT FROM THE BOARD

This, our 26th year, has been a good one, as we continue to provide alternative addiction services to women in a warm, friendly and safe environment. We received a two percent increase in funding from the Ministry of Health and Long term Care (MHLTC), for which we are thankful, but it is only through consultation with Staff and careful strategic planning that we make decisions for Amethyst to ensure that Amethyst delivers quality services, provided in the most effective, efficient and caring way, with the resources that we have on hand. Staff, Board and our volunteers are to be commended for their dedication to our commitment to participatory management, shared responsibility and respect for individual differences.

An in-depth organizational review regarding diversity and inclusion was conducted in 2003 and has resulted in Amethyst drawing up and adopting the following *Diversity Values Statement*:

"This statement is a framework to help us promote respect, equality, sensitivity and competency in all aspects of our work. Amethyst believes that diversity enriches the communities in which we live and work. We are committed to creating a centre that respects diversity and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of background, ethnicity, language, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, disability or economic status. This respect of diversity is reflected by our philosophy, our client services and our employment practices. All of our programs, activities and interactions are enriched by accepting each other as we are and by celebrating our unique contribution to the community."

At our last Annual General Meeting, we welcomed to our Board, Amelia Shepherd, and we are pleased to have had Maureen Murphy join our Board in October, Simone Joanisse and Cazibe Oloumi joined our Board in January, and Gisèle Frenette joined our Board in February. We acknowledge the work of Glynis Peters, Linda Marie Joly and Linda Zaluska, who resigned from the Board to attend to other commitments. We will miss Debbie Vanderburgh, whose term of office expires this year, and wish her well in the future. Staff representatives to our Board during this past year were Marguerite Tennier, Josephine FitzGerald, Claire Lacelle and Rose McDade. We thank these women, and all of the women who serve on the Board for their invaluable contribution and commitment to Amethyst.

We are pleased to note that there have been no changes at the Staff level. We celebrate Sandi Harmer's 25th year at Amethyst, and while we rarely see Donna Hall at 488 Wilbrod Street, she continues to work in our satellite office in Kanata. We would like to thank our Staff for the excellent job that they do.

Amethyst is very fortunate to have such committed women who ensure that those who come to Amethyst for help receive the understanding and treatment they require through such professional and caring women.

We continue to work to ensure that Amethyst is visible in the community, and we continue to be involved in interesting and challenging partnerships, both with the women's community as well as the addictions community. We are still involved in working with women who have both an addiction and a mental illness in the Homeless Initiative Pilot Project in association with the Canadian Mental Health Association, and we continue to be the lead agency in the Early Childhood Development Project.

Our United Way/Centraide Ottawa sponsored Health Promotion Programs are running effectively, and we thank United Way/Centraide Ottawa for its ongoing support of Amethyst. We thank Sandi Harmer and Alice Obina for making it possible for Amethyst to provide these exceptional services to our community. We would also like to thank Tracy Doran, for participating in United Way/Centraide Ottawa's *Invest in Hope* fundraising promotion in which Tracy spoke highly of her experience at Amethyst, and for her work in ensuring that our Catalyst data system is kept up to date.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank all of our community volunteers, who by giving their precious time working on fundraising, doing volunteer outreach, or giving professional advice, contribute so very much to Amethyst. I would also like to thank the members of our community for their generous and ongoing support which we rely heavily on so that Amethyst will continue to be able to offer treatment programs that value women's strengths and wisdom. We look forward to another good year for Amethyst with everyone's support.

Anne Hrnchiar
Chair

Board Members

Jane Caskey, Vice-Chair
Gisèle Frenette
Anne Hrnchiar, Chair
Simone Joanisse
Donna Larkin, Treasurer
Maureen Murphy
Cazibe Oloumi
Jane Parsard
Donna Pettey
Amelia Shepherd, Secretary
Debbie Vanderburgh

REPORT FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

*“Coming together is a beginning...
keeping together is progress...
working together is a success.”*

Author unknown

Management Committee welcomed Jane Caskey in July as the Board representative on Management Committee and Natalie Champagne joined Management Committee in January as the Staff representative; welcome to both Jane and Natalie! Anne Hrnchiar, our Board representative and Marguerite Tennier, our Staff representative had finished their two-year terms on Management Committee. A big thank-you to Anne and Marguerite for all their hard work during the past two years; it was very much appreciated.

There was only one staff change this year; Kim de Bellefeuille-Percy joined the staff at the Central Site office for the ECD Project when Maria Luisa Marti resigned for personal reasons in July.

Sandi Harmer, our Health Promotion Program Coordinator and a past recipient of the United Way *Community Builder Award* in 2000, was honoured in September by United Way /Centraide Ottawa as part of the ceremony for ‘unveiling the wall’ in which all past Community Builder Award recipients names were part of a ‘wall’ in City Hall. Sandi also had an anniversary in February 2005 celebrating her 25 years at Amethyst. Kudos to Sandi!

Amethyst continues to be involved with a number of initiatives in partnership with other agencies in the allied sector. We’re still part of the ECD Project as the lead sponsor agency. The continued development of the Coalitions in each region and the direct service delivery with our partner agencies is going strong as well as our involvement with the provincial and project evaluations of this project. In partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association in the Concurrent Disorders Project, we continue to work together on this initiative for another year.

In the area of Policy Development, the Centre added a policy for ‘Self-care’, maintaining our commitment for health and wellness for our Staff in the workplace. The Staff and Board also approved a ‘Diversity Values Statement’ that was developed through the efforts of the Diversity Working Group. We’re also in the process of writing the final draft of our *Working with Minor’s Policy* which looks at the safety issues for minors in our Children’s Programs.

The MOHLTC had initiated a restructuring process for all healthcare services in the province of Ontario this past October. Amethyst had been part of the process through the Champlain Addictions Coordinating Body. All healthcare services would be part of the Champlain Local Health Integration Network for this health district.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Amethyst’s hard-working Board of Directors for their outstanding work and continued support, Staff and Management Committee who did exceptional work during this period. A big thank-you to the community members, donors and volunteers for their continued support, generous contributions and commitment to Amethyst.

Carol Wu
Management Committee

Staff

Nighat Ara, Counsellor
Jocelyn Bigras, Administrator
Natalie Champagne, Community Relations and
Media Coordinator
Kim de Bellefeuille-Percy*, Project Developer,
ECD Project
Cindy Deschenes*, Community Facilitator,
ECD Project
Cathy Dolan*, Childcare Coordinator
Tracy Doran, Relief Administrative Assistant/
Intake Worker
Josephine FitzGerald, Counsellor
Erin Fowler, Counsellor
Marie Gérin, Art Therapist/Conseillère
Donna Hall, Counsellor (Kanata Satellite Office)
Sandi Harmer, Health Promotion
Program Coordinator
Claire Lacelle, Administrative Assistant/
Intake Worker
Gundel Lake, Counsellor
Rose McDade, Counsellor
Alice Obina, Health Promotion Worker
Marguerite Tennier, Conseillère
Carol Wu, Coordinator

* = Contract Staff

ENGLISH TREATMENT TEAM

There were no staff changes in 2004-2005. Gundel Lake is now working as a full-time permanent counsellor half-time in the English Treatment Program and half-time in the English Problem Gambling Program. Nighat Ara is also working as a full-time permanent counsellor in the English Treatment Program. The team members are adjusting to each other's working methods and they are working to their own rhythm. The Treatment Team now consists of five full time permanent counsellors, and Donna Hall, who works part-time at our Kanata Satellite office.

In order to prevent burn-out and compassion fatigue, the staff at Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre is practicing "self-care". It was decided, with the approval of our Board of Directors, that self-care days would be instituted four times per year. Staff members take turns planning a day of self-care for the staff. We have had three self-care days so far and each one was extremely enjoyable as well as refreshing to all the staff. Our September planning week was full of meetings, workshops and brain storming geared towards developing our plan of action for the coming year. This planning week is different and exciting as it brings all the staff very close to each other and we enjoy spending some special time together.

The Early Childhood Development (ECD) Project has evolved into its next stage and four part-time case managers have already started working under this project. Assessment, data collection and referrals are the main parts of their job.

Nadine Letang, Sandra Kelly and Eleanor Pritchard are working as the relief workers to fill in the gaps in the regular activities from time to time. The English Treatment Team is operating at its full capacity and is enjoying the work.

Nighat Ara
Counsellor

Student Placement

We have had students coming here for their placements consistently for the whole year. Sandra Kelly completed her placement here in April last year but we are still in touch with her through her occasional replacement work for groups. She had been a student at the University of Ottawa working on the Master of Education Counselling Program. The next student was Letitia Chow. She was here for three months in the summer of 2004. In September Anne-Marie Pinel joined us. Both of these students were also doing the Master of Education Counselling Program at the University of Ottawa. Our current student is Shaunacey

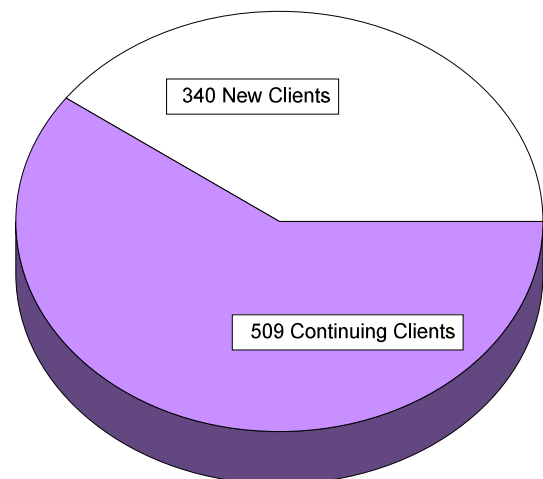
Hamilton. She is doing her B.S.W. at Carleton University and she will complete her placement in April, 2005. It has been good having these students since they have learned from us, but we have learned from them too. We are looking forward to our next placement who will be here for the summer.

Josephine FitzGerald, MSW, RSW,
Counsellor



Claire Lacelle
Administrative Assistant/Intake Worker
February 26, 2004
25th Anniversary Celebration at Algonquin College

849 Women Served



STATISTICS

One to One Counselling

English - 2,520
French - 425

Group Attendance

English - 1,528
French - 125

Intensive 10 Day Program

Offered 7 times in English to 57 participants
Offered once in French to 6 participants

Sexual Abuse Program

Offered 1 group to 4 participants and to family members

Health Promotion

Offered 15 groups with a total of more than 109 participants in the community (8-12 weeks per group)

Community Seminars

12 seminars are held on a yearly basis (1 seminar each month) at Wilbrod.

Play Therapy

Offered 1 group to 16 participants

Children's Drug Abuse Prevention

Offered 3 groups to 13 participants

Education Workshops

15 workshops reached more than 1,000 people

Parenting Program

Offered 1 group to 6 women

Art Therapy Program

Offered 3 groups to 13 women

Mother/Daughter Program

Offered 1 group to 4 participants

Lesbian Support Program

Offered 24 groups to 59 participants

Outreach Volunteers

We still have a good group of women who have graduated and like to support women going through our services here. We have nine women who are Outreach Volunteers and two of them joined this group after they graduated last spring. We meet every couple of months. It is also a big help to be with women who graduated many years ago. Thanks so much to all of you!

*Josephine FitzGerald, MSW, RSW,
Counsellor*

SEXUAL ABUSE PROGRAM

The Sexual Abuse Program offers individual and group counselling for women in the community who are in recovery from gambling and/or substance abuse and who want to explore and to heal from experiences of childhood sexual abuse.

Four women at Amethyst were ready to participate in the Sexual Abuse Group offered in the Fall of 2004. The evaluations revealed that participants appreciated the smaller group. They increased their awareness of the impact the abuse had in their lives, and their understanding of how they coped with the extreme trauma from a very early age. They benefited from each other's support and from each participant's gifts and strengths. This Fall, as well, we were invited to provide information to women living at Bertrand House, a supportive residence for women in recovery from alcohol and other drug dependency, with questions about the impact of childhood trauma.

Our Spring group will begin soon. We continue to offer Information Sessions for those special people chosen by participants to support them in their courageous healing work.

*Erin Fowler
Counsellor*

Follow-up Workshops

Additional programs offered to our clients and to other women in our community dealing with gambling and substance addiction this year include the Parenting Program and the Mother-Daughter Workshop.

We have benefited from the expertise and wisdom of Jane Fox who has co-facilitated the Parenting Workshop with the counsellors at Amethyst. Jane will no longer be able to work with us as she is moving out West. We are grateful for her knowledge, her experience and her sense of humour that she shared so generously with the women here and offer her our best wishes in her newest adventure!

Rose and Marie are planning the eight sessions for the Mother-Daughter Workshop which focus on daughters' relationships with their mothers. It is a significant and much requested resource for our clientele.

Erin Fowler
Counsellor

Art Therapy Workshop

Art therapy was favourably used in the French 10-day program, when women were asked to use images to illustrate some of the issues and feelings they were going through.

Marie Gérin
Art Therapist, Counsellor



Fulton's Pancake House & Sugar Bush
Pakenham, Ontario
April, 2004

About Our New Clients

340 Women became new clients
The average age of our new clients was 39

Primary addiction identified

- (1) Alcohol
- (2) Cannabis
- (3) Cocaine
- (4) Crack
- (5) Prescription opioids
- (6) Over-the-counter codein preparations
- (7) Ecstasy
- (8) Benzodiazepines
- (9) Other psychoactive drugs
- (10) Amphetamines and other stimulants
- (11) Heroin/Opium
- (12) Hallucinogems

Income

Employment	116
Employment Insurance	16
Other Insurance	1
Ontario Disability Support	52
Disability Insurance	18
Ontario Works	68
Retirement Income	11
Other	32
None	20
Unknown	6

Language

English	281
French	56
Spanish	1
Other	2

Education

University/College Graduate	115
Some Post-Secondary	68
High School	56
Some High School	79
Elementary School	9
Some Elementary School	
or less	1
Unknown	12

Legal Problems

No	260
Yes	67
Unknown	13

FRANCOPHONE TREATMENT PROGRAM

Marie Gérin and Marguerite Tennier are the two counsellors working in the Francophone Substance Abuse Treatment Program. In addition, Marie works in the Francophone Gambling Program.

During the past year, Marie and Marguerite have offered one Ten-day Program and six women started and completed the program. Marie has also collaborated with Gundel Lake in the Intensive Gambling Program.

Marguerite continues to represent Amethyst on the French Cluster (Réseau Franco-Toxico) and Marie represents us on the Ottawa Problem Gambling Coordinating Committee. Marguerite who has been a member of the National Capital Region Employee Assistance Program for a number of years has now joined the Executive of the Association, thus ensuring even more visibility for Amethyst among EAP providers.

*Marguerite Tennier, M.A.
Counsellor*

*Marie Gérin, Art Therapist
Counsellor*



Master of Ceremonies -
Jane Clark, Former Coordinator at Amethyst
February 26, 2004
25th Anniversary Celebration at Algonquin College

HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM

This year was, once again, a very demanding but exciting year. The year ended with Sandi resuming her full time position after her gradual return over the year and Alice heading off to Africa to finally bring her family home to Ottawa.

The year kept both of us busy. We facilitated 15 different eight-week groups across the city. This year, we added two new locations where we facilitated groups, Cornerstone and Bel Air Community Place. We were able to reach 109 women with a waiting list of over 104 women at the end of the year.

We delivered three eight-week Children's Drug Abuse Prevention Programs to 13 children. Our Play Therapy Program took a different direction this year – Sandi delivered the twelve-week program at Makonsag, the Headstart Program at the Odawa Native Friendship Centre to 16 children. She also provided individual play therapy sessions over a six month period which also included child and parent(s) sessions to children who had previously taken the Play Therapy Program.

We were involved in delivering 15 educational workshops which also included community awareness events reaching well over 1000 individuals. We continued to hold our monthly Community Seminars for interested community members and students.

Sandi was invited to speak at a Law and Mental Health International Conference to take place in Paris, France in July of 2005, but, unfortunately, could not attend due to the lack of funds to send her there.

Alice's position has been cut to two days per week due to the funding restraints of United Way/Centraide Ottawa. We are hoping that we will, first of all, receive funding from United Way/Centraide Ottawa to continue our Health Promotion Program and the Children's Program over the next two years and that the funding will provide enough money to increase Alice's hours.

*Sandi Harmer, Health Promotion Coordinator and
Alice Obina, Health Promotion Worker*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM

Our 25th Anniversary celebrations went quite well last year. Our Reminiscent/Dinner at the *Restaurant International* was attended by 150 supporters and friends of Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre.

Our 1st Annual "Best Ball" Golf Tournament was not attended by as many participants as we had hoped for or anticipated, however, all who did participate had a wonderful time at the Loch March Golf and Country Club and we have planned our 2nd Annual "Best Ball" Golf Tournament which will be held at The Meadows Golf and Country Club on Thursday, June 9, 2005 beginning at 12:45. We have obtained sponsorship from The New RO Cable 6 and from the Ottawa Sun. We have also obtained sponsorship of the golf tournament from AMTECH Power Systems Limited, GEM Campbell (Eastern) Inc. The Title Sponsor for the event is Sayers and Associates Limited. We are looking forward to working closely with these organizations and building long-lasting relationships.

I have spent the past year, in collaboration with the Fundraising and Membership Committee, on finding new and innovative ways of raising funds, increasing membership and planning for new events.

We continued to hold Community Seminars, on a monthly basis, at Amethyst. We attended Community/ Agency Fairs where we liaised with other agencies and members of the community to promote our services and our publications. We also participated in the United Way/Centraide Ottawa Speakers' Bureau as often as we could to increase our profile.

During this past year, we increased our visibility by having The Ottawa Citizen run a "Community Kudos" to Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre on Sunday, February 1, 2004. We had an article appear in the Ottawa Citizen on Saturday, June 26, 2004 entitled "A Safe House for Women". Tracy Doran, an Amethyst graduate client and volunteer participated in the United Way/Centraide Ottawa 2004 Campaign Video which was distributed to their Workplace Campaigns and shown on their web site. The Ottawa Citizen also published two pictures and a short story of Tracy during the United Way/Centraide Ottawa campaign which thanked their donors for investing in her and giving her courage. These pictures appeared on Wednesday, October 13, and again on Wednesday, November 24, 2004.

Natalie Champagne
Community Relations and Media Coordinator

PROBLEM GAMBLING PROGRAM

2004-2005 has been another very busy year for the Problem Gambling Program. We continue to serve an increasing number of women through individual counselling, bi-weekly support groups, and the intensive treatment program. Services are offered in both English and French. Women also have access to other follow-up programs and workshops such as the Sexual Abuse Survivor Program, Art Therapy, Health Promotion, and the Parent-Child Support Program. We are also pleased to welcome our very first Outreach Volunteer to the Problem Gambling Program this year; Outreach Volunteers are women who have previously graduated from the two year program and then volunteer their time to provide support to other women who attend Amethyst.

Staff have participated in several training and learning opportunities this past year, including the Making Gains in Mental Health and Addictions Conference as well as Rainbow Health 2004: Improving Access to Care. In addition, staff attended a one-day workshop entitled Integrating Race, Culture, and Class in Trauma Services, as well as a two-day workshop entitled Raising Awareness of Problem Gambling in Your Community facilitated by staff from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Each of these educational opportunities were very informative and relevant to the Problem Gambling Program.

Amethyst continues to work with various community agencies and remains a member of the Ottawa Problem Gambling Committee. In March 2005, Amethyst and the Ottawa Problem Gambling Coordinating Committee participated in a provincial-wide awareness and education initiative: *Within Limits: Problem Gambling Awareness Month/Zone Limite: Mois de la prévention du jeu problématique*. The purpose of this month is to raise awareness and education regarding the risks associated with problem gambling as well as where to get help if necessary.

As the number of women accessing the Problem Gambling Program remains fairly consistent, we look forward to another busy year in 2005-2006.

Gundel Lake
Counsellor



A United
Way/Centraide
member agency